

# The Rise of Energy Savings Performance Contracts

## Districts Use Concept to Fund Solar, LED, and More at No Cost to Taxpayers

By Kendra McQuilton, Director of Business Development, ECG Engineering, PC

Does your district have a mounting list of capital needs with limited or no viable means of funding? Would you like to move forward on many or all of those needs with no-out-of-pocket costs, lower your energy bills, and at the same time generate a positive cash flow?

If the answer to these questions is yes, there is a solution just waiting for your district to take advantage of: Energy Savings Performance Contracting (ESPC).

Once viewed as a niche program used primarily to replace only  
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### Highlights of Cheshire's ESPC Project—Paid for out of Guaranteed Energy Savings:

- ✓ District-wide computer-controlled LED Lighting Upgrades in all classrooms
- ✓ Lighting Controls
- ✓ State-of-the-Art Energy Management System
- ✓ Building Wide Electric to Hydronic Heat Conversion
- ✓ Chiller Replacement
- ✓ Oil to Gas Conversion
- ✓ High Efficiency Boilers and Furnaces
- ✓ Premium Efficiency Motors
- ✓ GPS synchronized clocks
- ✓ 12 other measures



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If interested in obtaining more information about this opportunity, please contact Kendra McQuilton, Director of Business Development, at [kendra@ecgengineering.com](mailto:kendra@ecgengineering.com). For additional information on ECG's services and reference clients, please visit [www.ecgengineering.com](http://www.ecgengineering.com) or contact Kendra.

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lighting, ESPC's are now considered key components in many school districts' long-term capital funding strategies. The ESPC concept is also being used as a taxpayer-friendly vehicle to bring the benefits of renewable energy sources to districts without impacting cost-sensitive budgets.

Here's how it works: A school district will retain a third party owner's representative/engineer that has specific expertise in the design and evaluation of energy performance contracts. That consultant will draft an RFP on behalf of the School District to secure competing proposals for the services of an Energy Services Company (ESCO). The ESCO identifies the project scope and determines the energy savings and the payback period. The ESCO builds the project, assists the School District in securing financing, and guarantees that the energy savings will pay for the entire cost of the upgrades.

In addition to the project paying for itself through savings, the School District will receive rebates, grants, and building aid largely as a bonus, creating a positive cash flow.

Administrators at the Town and School District of Cheshire, CT have successfully employed the ESPC concept as a means to fund district-wide capital projects without increasing taxes. The Town is currently constructing a self-funding ESPC that is making over \$10 million worth of energy efficient upgrades possible.

One of the highlights of the project is a district-wide lighting upgrade to dimmable LED. The project is also providing a complete conversion from electric heat to hydronic heating with high efficiency condensing natural gas boilers for the Highland ES and portions of the High School. Additionally, a cost saving oil-to-gas conversion and 18 other measures were implemented that will produce over \$600,000/year in guaranteed energy savings. All work was developed and installed at no out-of-pocket cost to the Town.

But the benefits don't end with the energy savings. Because the Cheshire ESPC was holistic in nature (multiple conservation methods and across multiple facilities), Eversource (previously CL&P/Northeast Utilities) granted the Town a 20% bonus in addition to their standard rebates, resulting in a total rebate award of over \$1.2 million. The Town and District plan to use this additional influx of funds to add



more energy saving measures or even upgrade existing ones above the ESPC scope (but the Town has no obligation to reinvest those funds into energy projects, so they can use the money for whatever purposed they choose)

Vincent Masciana, Director of Management Services for Cheshire Schools, explained that , for him, the  
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## Energy Savings (cont'd)

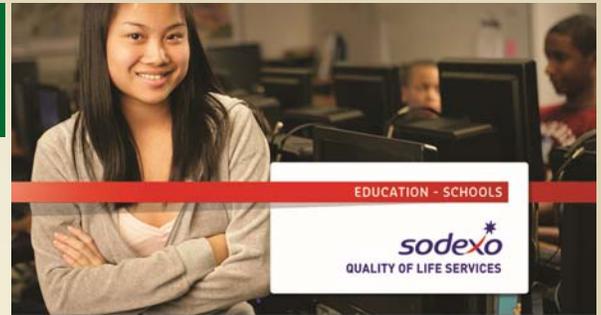
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project has been terrific on many levels. “The fact that the energy savings would pay for the facility improvements made this a very attractive project to our community and our taxpayers. Beyond that, using the ESPC, we completed infrastructure projects that we had been requesting in our capital or operating budgets for years that simply weren’t getting funded. For example, we replaced the 42 year old electric heating system at our largest elementary school with natural gas-fired rooftop heating units that also provide cooling. So by replacing the old energy-hog electric heat, we were able to provide a more comfortable environment for our students and staff including the addition of air-conditioning throughout our building...and we’re still saving money over what we were paying just to heat the place. Along the same lines, we replaced the fluorescent lighting fixtures in all our classrooms with computer-controlled LED lighting. That system is state-of-the art with motion and daylight sensors that improved lighting conditions while reducing our electricity costs by an amazing 80%+. And better still, the LED’s are rated for 50,000 hours before needing replacement (based on estimated use – that will be in about 15 years). So our maintenance staff will not have to get up on ladders to change light bulbs or ballast in classrooms saving their time, reducing the potential for injuries and also saving the fluorescent bulb disposal costs we use to have to pay. It’s also important to note is that we were assigned a professional project manager who handled the day-to-day details and there was no municipal bid process required so once our project contract was executed, we were able to hit the ground running. Overall, our ESPC project was a win-win for the students and staff of the Cheshire Public Schools, the Ton, and our taxpayers.”

Cheshire’s ESPC was overseen by the district’s technical consultant and third party engineer, ECG Engineering, PC, and is currently being built by Ameresco, Inc. The project is expected to be completed in the Winter of 2015.

*For information more information about the benefits from an ESPC, please contact Kendra McQuilton at 516-551-4320 or*

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